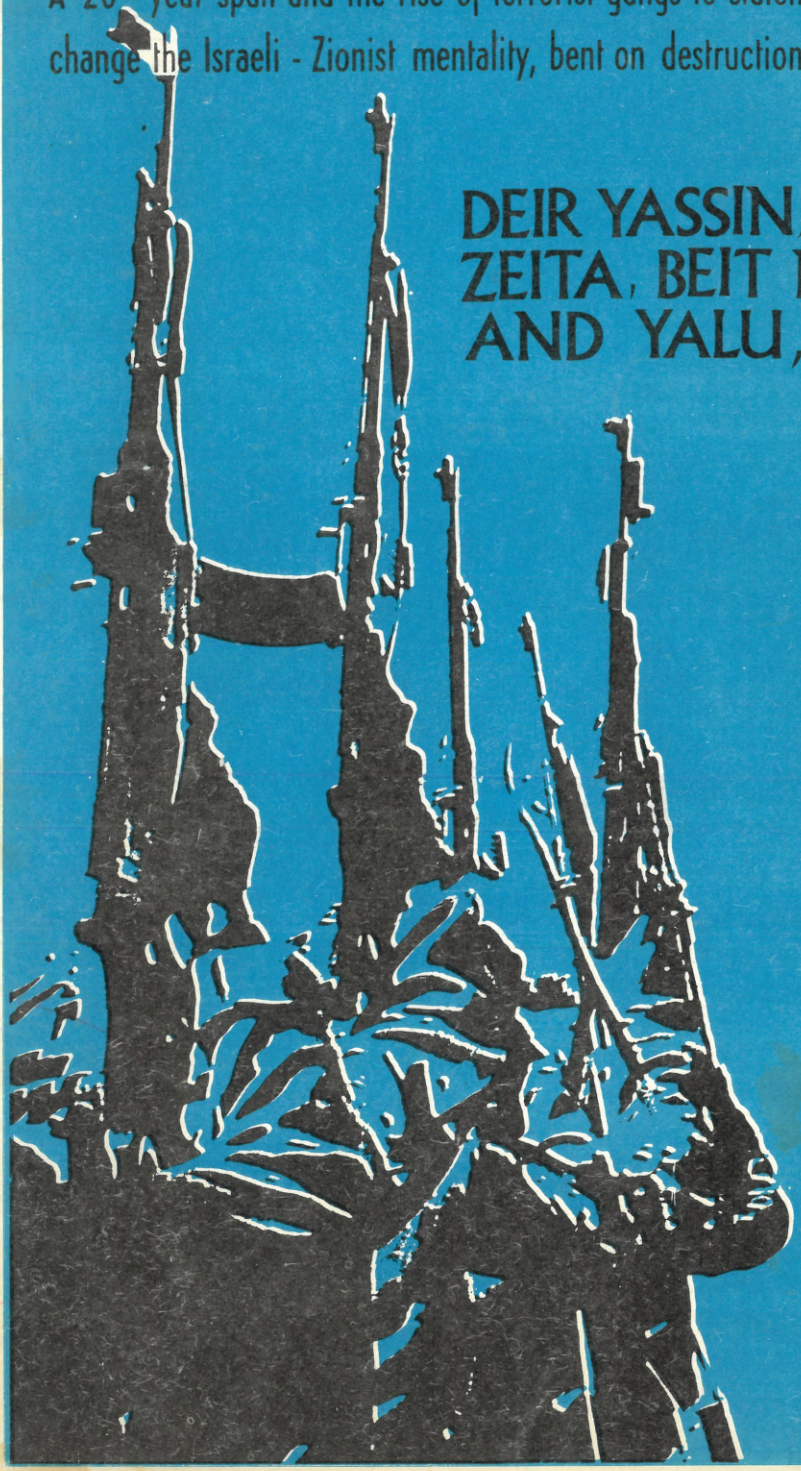
A 20 - year span and the rise of terrorist gangs to statehood can not change the Israeli - Zionist mentality, bent on destruction and terror:

DEIR YASSIN, 1948
ZEITA, BEIT NUBA AND YALU, 1967



Deir Yassin: A Forgotten Tragedy With Present-Day Meaning

Where and When Did The Cycle of Violence Begin? How Can It Be Ended?

BY GUY OTTEWELL

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On April 9, 1948, Jewish terrorists of the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern Gang massacred 254 Arabs of Deir Yassin, a village at the western edge of Jerusalem.

Deir Yassin had done nothing to provoke this. Sometimes it is said to have been "a nest of armed Arabs" or "a point of concentration for an Arab attack." Actually this was impossible because it was entirely surrounded by Jewish suburbs. It had "for months lived peaceably in a sort of agreement with them,"[1] "had on occasion collaborated with the Jewish Agency,"[2] was said by a Jewish newspaper to have driven out some Arab militants,[3] and was "practically the only village in the Jerusalem area which had not applied to the Arab authorities saying it was in danger".[4]

Sometimes the massacre is said to have been in revenge for an Arab attack on a convoy to the Hadassah Hospital. Actually this took place five days later.

And sometimes it is said that the terrorists suffered casualties (4 dead and nearly 40 wounded) as they approached the village. "They may have made contact with a party of Arab irregulars—

1. *New York Times*, April 12, 1948.
2. Jon Kimche, *Seven Fallen Pillars*.
3. *New Judea*, cited by William Polk, David Stamler and Edmund Asfour, *Backdrop to Tragedy*.
4. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 12, 1948.

not the villagers."[5] The men of the village were absent, for they worked in the city. When the Jews entered the village, they found none but old people, women, and children.

Arabs Appeal to Red Cross

For two days afterwards, while they tried to tidy up the mess they had made, the Irgun allowed no one else in, except a Jewish policeman who reported that *one* Arab had been killed.[6] The Arabs of Jerusalem begged the British authorities to investigate, but the British, afraid of the terrorists, would not go near the place. The Arabs then appealed to the Palestine delegate of the Red Cross, Jacques de Reynier, and he went. He found 150 bodies thrown into a cistern, and another 40 or 50 at one side. In all he counted 254 dead, including 145 women of whom 35 were pregnant. He found a 6-year-old Arab girl still living under a heap of corpses.[7] "Eye witnesses said later that it was not possible to go near the village without becoming nauseated."[8]

The village was looted[9] and razed to the ground. It is not now marked on Israeli maps. Its site is under Kfar Sha'ul, a suburb of Israeli Jerusalem.

150 surviving women and children were stripped and paraded on open trucks through a Jewish quarter, where they were stoned and spat on. An American lady took 40 orphaned children into the Anna Spafford Nursing Home in Jerusalem; but, when she approached one little boy, he screamed "She is one of them"! and fell down with a heart-attack, from which he later died.[10]

The Irgun and Stern Gang escorted a party of American correspondents to a press conference and "offered them tea and

5. Sir John Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, p. 81.
6. Polk, Stamler and Asfour, op. cit.
7. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 12, 1948.
8. Polk, Stamler and Asfour, op. cit.
9. The Haganah, or official Jewish militia, issued a statement accusing the terrorists of "robbery" and "looting"—*New York Times*, April 13, 1948.
10. Bertha Spafford Vester, of the American Colony in Jerusalem, *Our Jerusalem*, 1951.

cookies and amplified details of the operation."[11] They announced that it was the first Jewish capture of an Arab village (in this they were inexact) and that it was "the beginning of the conquest of Palestine *and Trans-Jordan.*"[12] They posted leaflets, descriptive of the massacre, in many Arab villages. Loudspeaker vans toured Arab Jerusalem broadcasting in Arabic: "Unless you leave your homes, the fate of Deir Yassin will be your fate!"[13]

"The full details, the fact that the villagers had been peaceful and neutral, that they had been attacked by terrorists with the active support of the Jewish Agency's own army, and that the population had been massacred, stripped and robbed, and their bodies had been left unburied or thrown into wells, were widely circulated throughout Palestine"[14]—with predictable effect on the rest of the Arab inhabitants.

Similar To Nazi Atrocities

Deir Yassin has been compared with the Nazi attrocities at Oradoursur-Klane and Lidice, or even "was a horror worse than Lidice, for in Lidice only the men and boys were slaughtered."[15] Apologists for Israel customarily call it "an isolated incident." An Israeli government pamphlet of 1958 calls it "the one and only instance of Jewish high-handed action in this war." Actually numerous other Arab places were being bloodily assaulted: for instance Qazaza 4 months before Deir Yassin (December 1947), Sa'sa' (February 1948), Salameh and Bir Adas and Kanna (March 1948), and, in the same months as Deir Yassin, Kastel and Lajjun and Saris and Tiberias and Haifa and Jaffa and Acre and Nasr-ed-Din and Katamon. (At Katamon, an Arab part of Jerusalem New City, the method of throwing the corpses of men and women down the well was again employed.[16]) During the interregnal

11. *New York Times*, April 10, 1948.
12. Polk, Stamler and Asfour, op. cit.
13. Vester, op. cit.
14. Polk, Stamler and Asfour, op. cit.
15. *The Christian Century*, March 16, 1949.
16. Jacques de Reynier, *A Jérusalem un Drapeau Flottait sur la Ligne de Feu*, 1950, p. 129.

period of strife between November 1947 and May 1948, the ratio *killings by Jews: killings by Arabs* was about 1078: 320 (more than 3:1) in the part of the period leading up to Deir Yassin, and 269:42 (more than 6:1) in the part following Deir Yassin.[17] In short, the Deir Yassin "incident" was "isolated" only by its magnitude.

Two days after Deir Yassin, the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine issued this statement, signed by its secretary, Dr. Husein Khalidi:

"We realize that the Jews have been treated in this manner by the Nazis. We know of their suppressed hatred of their persecutors. But now their hatred is directed against Arabs, among whom the Jews have lived for 13 centuries...The Arab reaction is not for me to say, but *there will be no reprisals.*"

The Jewish Agency for Palestine (forerunner of the Israeli government) and the Haganah (military arm of the Jewish Agency) publicly dissociated themselves from the outrage and announced that none of their troops had taken part. Hence, we are told to this day that Israel has no official responsibility for this and other actions of the terrorists.

But the Irgun published[18] this letter they had received from the Jerusalem commander of the Haganah: "I learn that you plan an attack on Deir Yassin. I wish to point out that the capture of Deir Yassin and holding it is one stage in our general plan. I have no objection to your carrying out the operation provided you are able to hold the village... If foreign forces [i.e. native Arabs] enter the place this will upset our plan for establishing an airfield [on the ruins of the village]."

According to at least one careful authority[19] the Haganah actually participated: "For reasons which are still somewhat unclear, it was decided to take the village and the Irgun was entrusted with the task. Irgun failed to do so and had to call upon Haganah for assistance. Together the two groups captured the village, whereupon Haganah seems to have withdrawn from the scene, leaving the Arab captives to the tender mercies of the Irgun."

17. Added up from the day-by-day summaries of events in *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1947 and 1948, p. 9237 ff.
18. In their newspaper *Ha-Mashkif*, April 11, 1948.
19. Polk, Stamler and Asfour, op. cit.

After the massacre, the Irgun handed the village over to the Haganah, by whom it was formally occupied on April 12.[20]

Besides the Irgun, the Stern Gang, and the Haganah, yet another Jewish force was involved: Palmach, commandos of the Haganah. In the *Palestine Post*[21] Palmach denied that it had "co-operated," and said that it had merely "provided covering fire."

As for the Jewish Agency itself, it was this body that M. de Reynier had to ask for permission to enter the village (and that for a day refused him the permission).[22]

Israel Accepted Terrorists' Benefits

In any case, the Jewish Agency took no action against the terrorists. "The Government invited the Jewish Agency... to call upon the Jewish community for their assistance in bringing to justice members of terrorist groups who had been guilty of murder and other crimes over a considerable period... The invitation was declined by the Agency on the ground that it was contrary to Jewish political interests... The Agency... undertook to establish a civil guard to deal with terrorist groups; however, this force has never been created..."[23]

Israel has accepted and made permanent the benefits of the terrorists' actions (the convenient exodus of the Arabs). Israel has not handed back Arab territory, such as Jaffa, captured by the Irgun alone. The subject of complicity between officials and terrorists is a shrouded subject in Israel: "Much is still obscure as to the relations between the Haganah or the Government and the Irgun. For comprehensible reasons, the Government does not think the time is yet come to tell its story fully and frankly."[24] But operations by the unofficial forces were retrospectively "adopted" by the state of Israel, which now pays equal war-pensions to veterans

20. *New York Times*, April 13, 1948.
21. April 13, 1948.
22. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 12, 1948.
23. (British) Palestine Government statement addressed to the Jewish Agency, March 1, 1948.
24. Harry Sacher, *Israel, the Establishment of a State*, 1952, p. 13.

of the Irgun, the Stern Gang, and the official forces.[25] For example, four of the Irgunists who took part in the crusade against Deir Yassin were reported to have received pensions.[26] Menachem Begin, founder and leader of the Irgun and then of the Herut, the second largest party in Israel, is now a minister in the Israeli cabinet.

One day after Deir Yassin, the Haganah exploited its capture by capturing the next Arab village, Kolonia, also of strategic importance because it lay beside the main road out of Jerusalem. They "blew up a score of houses and left the entire village ablaze."[27] "Yesterday the Haganah completed the destruction of the village by blowing up the remaining houses."[28]

Three days after Deir Yassin, "The Zionist General Council approved...the long-debated military accord between the Haganah and Irgun Zvai Leumi terrorist organization...Under the agreement, Irgun Zvai Leumi terrorist organization retains its military structure but comes under the command of the Haganah..."[29] On the same day the same Zionist General Council offered "peace and freindship" to the Arabs, and proclaimed that a Jewish State would be established in Palestine one month thence.

12 days after Deir Yassin, the Haganah and Irgun openly joined forces in conquering Haifa. 57,000 of its 62,000 Arabs fled.

To this day, the Israeli position is that they left voluntarily; that Arab broadcasts urged them to leave "so that the Arab armies could sweep through." (All broadcasts in the Middle East in 1948 were monitored, and in 1961 the records were examined, and there was not *one* Arab *broadcast* urging Arabs to leave; there were several urging Arabs to stay.[30]) Israel avers it has no responsibility for the flight of these refugees, *only 12 days after Deir Yassin.*

Jon Kimche, a Zionist publicist, writes[31] that the terrorists

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25. Israeli "Fallen Soldiers' Family Pension and Rehabilitation Law" of 1950.
26. *Time magazine*, June 15, 1953.
27. *New York Times*, April 12, 1948.
28. *Palestine Post*, April 12, 1948.
29. *New York Times*, April 13, 1948.
30. Erskine Childers, in the London *Spectator*, May 12, 1961.
31. In his *Seven Fallen Pillars*, p. 228.

"justified the massacre of Deir Yassin because it led to the panic flight of the remaining Arabs in the Jewish state area." Don Peretz, Jewish American scholar, writes that as a result of Deir Yassin "a mass fear psychosis...grasped the whole Arab community," Arthur Koestler: this "bloodbath...was the psychologically decisive factor in the spectacular exodus" of Arab refugees. Menachem Begin himself[32] describes what his men did and concludes: "Panic overwhelmed the Arabs of Eretz Israel [i.e. of Palestine]...The Arabs began fleeing in panic, shouting 'Deir Yassin!'...The political and economic significance of this development can hardly be over-estimated."

Assigned to International Zone

A reminder of the time and place. The United Nations had advised (November 29, 1947) that Palestine be partitioned into a Jewish State, an Arab State, and a Jerusalem International Zone. Deir Yassin was on land assigned to the International Zone; it was separated by 15 miles of Arab State from the nearest part of the proposed Jewish State. The partition was to come into effect on May 15, 1948.

Now, not only Israelis but the popular news media of the whole Western world tell us that on May 15 "the armies of five Arab countries invaded the new-born state of Israel." What happened was that these armies (totaling 21,500 men as against 65,000[33]) entered Arab areas, *and none but Arab areas*, at the fervent entreaty of their inhabitants, to try to protect them against further Deir Yassins.[34] And, long before May 15, Deir Yassin itself, and Jaffa, and Katamon, and Nasr-ed-Din, and Qazaza, and Haifa, and Safad, and many other conquests of Arab areas, had already happened. Who then invaded? Who started the 1948 war?

We are told that the million Arab refugees cannot be allowed

32. In his *The Revolt*, New York, 1951, p. 162-165.
33. Glubb, op. cit., p. 94.
34. Cable by King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan to the Security Council, May 16, 1948: "We were compelled to enter Palestine to protect unarmed Arabs against massacres similar to those of Deir Yassin."

back to their homes, nor the Arabs allowed to win a war against Israel, because they hate the Israelis and will wipe them out if they get the chance.

Judging by *deeds*, as opposed to words: Arabs have never *done* anything to Jews comparable to what Jews did to Arabs at Deir Yassin, at Qibya (October 1953—53 Palestinian villagers killed by blowing up their houses to which they were confined by gunfire), at Khan Yunis (April 1956—275 killed, of whom 140 were refugees and 135 local people), at Kafr Qasim (October 1956—51 villagers, more than half women and children, killed for being outside their houses during a curfew of which they were not told), at Karameh refugee camp (November 1967—children coming out of school mown down by mortars and anti-personnel fragmentation bombs aimed deliberately along the main street).

Even judging by words: if selected utterances of Ahmad Shukairy (now deposed from headship of the Palestine Liberation Organization) prove Arabs in general to be monsters of hatred and violence, then selected utterances of Menachem Begin (now a member of the Israeli government) would prove no less of the Jews.

Arabs Did Not Hate Israel

Some Arabs are very bitter, and they have (to put it mildly) good cause. Most Arabs simply want to recover some proportion of what they have lost. They might even be content to forego material justice if they could get historical justice—the world's recognition that they at least have a grievance.

On Christmas Day, 1963, village dances in village costumes were performed for a gathering in Jordanian Jerusalem (as it then was) by some girls from Dar et-Tifl, "Kids' House," a home for refugee children from Deir Yassin. Talking with them, I discovered that *even they* didn't hate the Israelis.

What do the majority of Arabs want?—and: What should be the solution to the Palestine problem? The answers to these two questions coincide:

Not revenge; not a return to the past; but a *bi-national state*

in or including Palestine.

In it would live as equals—

(1) the Arabs whose natural right it is to live in it because they used to live in it, because they were its natives for 13 centuries up to their expulsion in 1948;

(2) the Jews who desire to live in it because their ancestors or spiritual ancestors lived in it 18 centuries ago;

(3) anyone else who desires to live in it.

Such a state (which might be still more accurately called a *multi-national state* or a *non-national state)* would be constituted neither Jewish, Arab, nor Muslim. Nor would this state be committed to the dominance of any religious or ethnic section at all. It would be a state of and for all inhabitants.

The model exists right next door to Palestine: Lebanon, a bi-national Christian and Muslim state. By natural development, Palestine would have grown into just such a bi-national state, Arab and Jewish. The 640,000 Arabs in it in 1917 have grown by natural increase to 2,400,000.[35] The 48,000 Jews in it in 1917 have grown by immigration to 2,400,000. Though even in 1917 Palestine was twice as densely populated as the United States,[36] yet there is apparently room for all these people and more: Israel is calling for another 3,000,000 *Jewish* immigrants. But meanwhile 1,400,000 of the native Arabs are refugees,[37] while Jews and Arabs are living in two armed camps separated by devastated war-zones.

Could the ideal of the bi-national state ever really be brought about? I do not know. But if it is not, the other possible futures are all evil. They are: a continuing military stalemate between Arabs and Jews; or a military prostration of one side by the other, which means either the sudden overrunning of Israel, or a steady conquest of the whole Middle East by a Jewish empire.

What went wrong in the past? What obstacle prevents a bi-national state in the future? Again, the answers to these two

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35. Jordanian census of July 1968: Palestinian Arabs (mostly outside Palestine) numbered 2,462,128 on June 15.
36. Palestine census of 1922 (when Jews were 12 per cent of the population): 28 people per square kilometer. U.S. census of 1920: 15 people per square kilometer.
37. Jordanian census of July 1968: refugees were 1,389,666 on June 15.

questions coincide:

The idea of a Jewish nation-state.

An Exclusively Jewish State

Zionists are, by definition, people who do not want a bi-national, multi-national or non-national state, for they want a state constitutionally Jewish, of and for Jews, governed by Jews, and with a majority, if not a totality of Jews. They wanted it even though it would have to be forced on a land already full of another people. Israel is the fulfilment of Zionism. By its Law of Return, any Jew from any part of the world (even if he is a proselyte—a convert—or a descendant of proselytes who never lived in Palestine) becomes a citizen of the country as soon as he lands in it, without other conditions; by its Nationality Law, Arabs native to it must apply to be naturalized, must prove sundry complicated things with documents which they have little hope of obtaining, must be competent in Hebrew and may still be turned down by the Ministry of the Interior. And, of course, those Arabs already driven out of their land can never enter it again. As long as Israel remains Zionist, it will not allow its own negation, a bi-national state in Palestine.

Two ideals: a state of and for one race, and a state of and for whoever wishes to live in it.

The first is a European product. It started with the break-up of the Roman empire into barbarian nations; it culminated in Hitler's *Ein Volk, Ein Reich;* Zionists who are Europeans, insisted on it from the publication of *Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State)* in 1896. It is still the only kind of state most Europeans conceive of, which is why, finding two peoples in a land, they partition it.

The second, the composite kind of state, has always characterized the Middle East. Middle Eastern states, including Biblical Israel, were not racial blocks, but lines superimposed on a mosaic of peoples. What we call Arabs are really the same ancient multitude of Canaanites, Phoenicians, Philistines, Jews, Hittites and Hellenes, now speaking Arabic. The West Bank of Jordan was a typical Middle Eastern congeries, composed not just of Arab

Muslims, but of Orthodox Christians, Latin Christians, Melkites, Assyrians, Jacobites, Armenians, Copts, Abyssinians, Circassians, Kurds, Druses, Bahais, Samaritans, Gypsies, Solubah...coexisting though of strikingly different appearance and traditions; and one was often told that the mixture had been even richer when the Jews were part of it. The Jews, originally a Middle Eastern people, were the corollary of this kind of state, a component people in many states; like the Gypsies. They carried this ideal into Europe, where Stalin (meaning to be harsh) called them "rootless cosmopolitans". They once seemed the forerunners of a future system of international societies; from this ideal they have retrogressed.

When the U.N. in 1947 imposed partition, the alternative was a unitary Palestine with proportionate representation for its component communities. This is hardly an *extreme* thing to ask for. Yet it is what is asked for by the Arabs whom we now call "extremists."

"The Palestinian Arabs...want to return not to Israel but to a restored state of Palestine, where Arabs and Jews live together without either side dominating the other. This is the doctrine of the principal Palestinian guerrilla movement under the leadership of Yasir Arafat."[38] To which proposal the *Los Angeles Times* has interpreted this Zionist response: "This, of course, is utterly out of the question to Israel, and no peace could ever be negotiated on this basis."[39]

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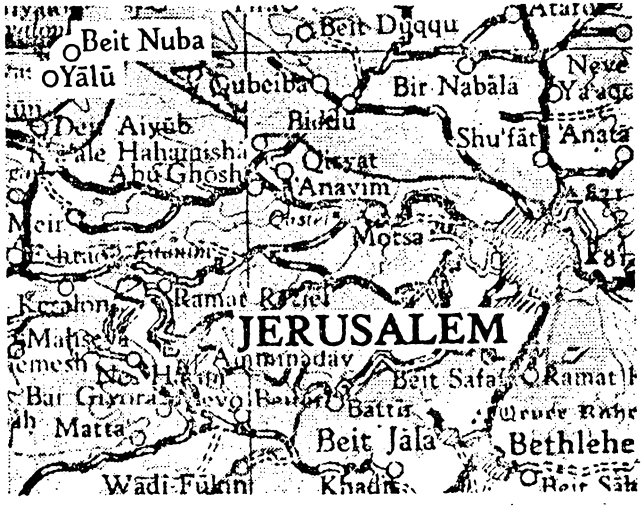
38. *Christian Science Monitor*, October 11, 1968; Also see *Christian Science Monitor*, February 8, 1969.
39. January 12, 1969.

Zeita...Beit Nuba...Yalu... and how the Israelis have erased them from the Holy Land

BY MICHAEL ADAMS

(Michael Adams is an English freelance journalist and writer on Near Eastern affairs; at present is the director of the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British understanding.)



A friend took me the other day to visit the Palestinian village of Zeita. As we were unsure of the road we stopped on the way out of Jerusalem to buy a map. The only one I could find was a pilgrim's map of the Holy Land which contained much tempting information about the biblical sites we should pass on our way through Samaria but little that was relevant for a traveller wanting to find his way about the Israeli-occupied west bank area of Jordan.

It did not mention Zeita. Nor, I found, do many people know much about the place. I believe they should.

Zeita stands on the old armistice line between Jordan and Israel about 30 miles north-west of Jerusalem. The armistice agree-

ment of 1949, which established a de facto frontier, cut the Arab villagers of Zeita off from the lands which they had always cultivated. Their lands, to their bewilderment, became part of the new State of Israel; their village remained in Jordan.

They managed...

The villagers realized that they had to make a new start in life. They cleared the stones from a new area of land east of the village and began to cultivate it in place of the land they had lost. Over the years they managed pretty well. Then came June, 1967.

On June 9, the fifth day of the six-day war, Israeli troops entered the village. There was no fighting but the Israelis fired some mortar shells into the village, after which the surrender was unconditional. For two days an uneasy peace reigned, the village was under curfew and there were no incidents between the victors and the vanquished.

On the evening of the third day, June 11, the local Israeli commander came to the house of the Mukhtar, the village headman, and asked if he had any complaints. None, said the Mukhtar, but he wondered whether it would be possible to shorten the hours of curfew so that the villagers could go out to cultivate their fields.

The commander agreed to this and after drinking a cup of tea he took his leave. It had been an amicable encounter.

Next morning the villagers set out early for their fields but were turned back by Israeli soldiers. The Mukhtar, thinking there was a misunderstanding, asked to see the commander but was told that he was in a meeting with his superior officer. Instead he was ordered to get all the villagers out and into a field on the eastern side of the village. He was not allowed to go back into his own house to get his shoes on.

When all the villagers were assembled, Israeli guards climbed on to the nearest rooftops and trained their guns on the crowd. It was about 6.30 in the morning. No one was allowed to move and the villagers stayed where they were until 6 in the evening.

No adult could go aside to relieve himself, no child could go and fetch a cup of water. (The sun is hot in Palestine in June.)

While they sat there, Israeli soldiers carefully and systematically blew up 67 houses, including a school and a clinic maintained by the International Council of Churches.

At 6 in the evening the commander appeared on a rooftop with a loudspeaker and told them they could "return to their homes." As they did so, the commander approached the Mukhtar and engaged him in conversation.

"Is that the end of it?" asked the Mukhtar, and the commander replied that "it was not my wish. I had orders from above."

The Mukhtar replied: "We don't complain about losing our homes in war (referring to the shelling on June 9), but you asked us to surrender and we did. You asked for our arms and we gave them to you. You made no complaint. You came to my house, you let me receive you (this is significant in the context of the Arab tradition of hospitality), and then you do this. Why?"

Back in Jerusalem I put the same question to the official spokesman at the headquarters of the Israeli military Government. He did not remember the name of Zeita but he telephoned for me to the commander of the area, in Tulkarem.

The answer was that fewer than 67 houses had been destroyed and it had taken place "during the war." Since I knew this was not true, I asked if he could make further inquiries for me, which he promised to do. When I telephoned to him later in the day he said there was nothing to add to the earlier reply.

In Jerusalem I stayed at the YMCA and one evening towards the end of my stay I picked up the Bible that lay on my dressing table to see if I could find a key to the things that puzzled me about the way the Israelis behaved towards their Arab neighbours.

My eye fell on a verse from Deuteronomy which said: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance...in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it."

Tearless misery

The verse stayed in my mind until the time came for me to leave the Holy Land, when another friend drove me down to

the airport at Lydda—not by the main road, but following the old road that winds through the hills past Latrun.

Passing through what a year ago was no-man's land on the border between Jordan and Israel, we overtook three women walking along that empty road with the proud gait and in the flowing robes of Old Palestine.

We stopped and exchanged the courtesies of the Arab world. What was their errand, we asked, and their reply had the Biblical ring that falls so naturally from the lips of the Palestine Arabs. "We go to collect a few sticks", they said. Where from? we asked, looking round at the bare hillsides and the fields of young wheat.

"From Beit Nuba," one of them replied. And all at once the three of them began to wail, with a tearless misery that mocked the sunshine.

A mile farther on, over a ridge, there was a line of cypress trees with, beside it, a patch of earth, newly disturbed. On the other side of the road was another, larger patch, bounded by a cactus hedge.

Beyond it, another—and in the distance a whole series of these patches, half-healed scars on the quiet landscape, with here and there a cistern or a scrap of woodwork, or a twisted piece of metal.

This was all that remained of Beit Nuba and its sister village of Yalu. The Israelis have obliterated them, wiped them off the face of the earth.

For the Arabs whose homes were here, and whose ancestors had lived here for who knows how many hundreds of years, there was nothing left but the hope of scavenging "a few sticks" which the Israel demolition squads might have overlooked, when they carted away all but the last forlorn evidence that this was Arab land.

The road we were on was the road to Imwas, or Emmaus. Yet, when we drove on from Beit Nuba and rounded the bend where Emmaus had stood—and where once Jesus of Nazareth, unrecognized by His disciples in those first strange days after His crucifixion, broke bread with them and blessed them so that "their eyes were opened and they knew Him"—we found that Emmaus too was gone, utterly vanished.

It was marked on my pilgrim's map of the Holy Land, but it will never be marked again on any map produced in the State of Israel, for the Israelis, pre-occupied with their security, have eliminated it.

Beside you once again are the tell-tale patches of newly bulldozed earth and the few splintered fragments of ancient habitations. The olives have been picked and the fruit trees, bare in the sunshine, will bear fruit again. But the villagers of Emmaus, short of a miracle, will never gather that fruit.

And there is one last detail. From the earth where houses had stood, like maggots crawling from a recent corpse, sprout tiny seedlings of eucalyptus.

In days to come, no doubt, young Israelis in search of a picnic site will take the ancient road to Emmaus and spread themselves under these trees and laugh and take their ease. But there will be ghosts among the branches, For here, if anywhere, stood "thy neighbour's landmark."

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THE PALESTINE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT - FATEH